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SALT violations

Mounting evidence suggests that the Soviet Union has violated SALT I and SALT II. The list of respected officials making this charge includes: former Secretaries of Defense Melvin Laird and James Schlesinger; Assistant Secretary of State James Buckley; the former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Daniel Graham; and William van Cleave, a member of the President's Committee on Arms Control.

These and other critics allege more than 30 specific violations. David Sullivan, for seven years a CIA analyst, describes many in a recent book, *The Bitter Fruit of SALT*. Others are documented in a report from the Rand Corp. One turned up, apparently by accident, in an official Department of Defense publication entitled *Soviet Military Power*.

According to these reports, the Soviets test and deploy illegal ABM systems, with no response from the U.S. government. Experts say the Russians have 1,300 to 2,000 stockpiled ICBMs, quantities that push them above the SALT ceilings. The Kremlin is said to cover up these and other actions by interfering with U.S. verification procedures — a further violation of both treaties.

Any of these actions, if authenticated, would be important. Yet U.S. policy, for a number of years, was to look the other way in the hope of saving the arms negotiations. The Republican

platform of 1980 used the term "cover-up" to describe the government's response to Soviet duplicity. A number of officials who were asked to downplay those violations in testimony before Congress have said the same thing.

Still, the president has stuck with the policy of the past, reluctant to point the finger at SALT violations. President Reagan has gone so far as to pledge the U.S. will not "undercut" existing arms agreements "provided the Soviet Union shows equal restraint."

The implicit suggestion is that there has, in fact, been restraint. Yet there is evidence to the contrary. Rep. Jack Kemp, who was a Congressional delegate to SALT II, says the Soviets have violated both SALT I and SALT II. So do Senators Gordon Humphrey, Henry Jackson, and others in Congress who have seen and evaluated the evidence.

A congressional investigation seems warranted and may, in fact, be imminent. If there is to be any hope for the administration's START initiative, the Soviet leaders must know that they are expected to comply with the treaty they sign. A congressional inquiry would air the evidence fully, yet protect Ronald Reagan from reckless accusations that he is trying to undermine arms control. It would help us arrive at the truth in an area where the truth, however awful, must be faced.